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**Rethinking RYOTARO SHIBA's Historical Travel Writings relating to the Korean
Peninsula: In Terms of the KANSEI-Affective Philosophy developed
in His *KAIDOU WO YUKU* Collection**

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This paper aims at redefining Ryotaro SHIBA (1923-96)'s long-term serial travel essays entitled *Kaidou wo Yuku* (Walking along the Streets) as an unique collection based on his KANSEI-affective philosophy. The *Kaidou wo Yuku* had been contributed to a weekly journal *Shuukan-Asahi* by the Asahishimbun newspaper

company in 1971-1996.

Here we will especially focus on two earliest works in the *Kaidou wo Yuku* concerning the Korean Peninsula culture: the first essay 《Kosei no Michi (Road along the West Side of Lake Biwa)》 in 1971 and the second 《Kara-no-kuni Kikou (Travel to South Korea)》 in 1971-72. At the beginning of his 25-yaer-walk travels SHIBA called at the Lake Biwa area in Shiga prefecture near Kyoto in order to trace the remains of the ancient Korean immigrants, who had settled with some highly-advanced knowledge and technology of their days. This small travel became a jumping board up to the second. The second travel to Korea took a ‘highway’ running on the Japanese Sea between the island and the peninsula, an edge, or periphery of the continent in East Asia.

A basis of SHIBA’s KANSEI-affective philosophy is characterized by his keen insight, which is penetrating into the deepest historical layer at the local sites. The characteristic perspective of his own is supported by the following: a hands-on field approach and half-advanced-step imagination beyond a rigid philological method. On his way to the ancient capitals of the three kingdoms once existed in South Korea (up to the mid-seventh century, A. D.: the downfall of Kutara/*Baekje*), through the vehicle window, SHIBA had frequently stared at a passing landscape moment by moment, and contemplated into the depth of its vernacular history.

Consequently, we can say, Ryotaro SHIBA found several Japanese characteristics in the historical landscapes of Korea, while he discovered the vestiges of the ancient Korean around the Lake Biwa. SHIBA firmly believed that there had been two-way communication and dissemination between Japan and Korea, and we Japanese had ever lived, or were still living in a day-dream of the ancient Korean illusion. This is why SHIBA’s writing style in the words delineating the Korean people, dead or alive, in the 《Kara-no-kuni Kikou》 is rather imaginative, theatrical, and literary than documental. Those sorts of the passages are colorfully ornamented with the subtle and profound characters like a fairy-tale protagonist. We conclude that Ryotaro SHIBA, the travel writer of the *Kaido wo Yuku* is not a historical scholar but a historical story-teller itself.

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